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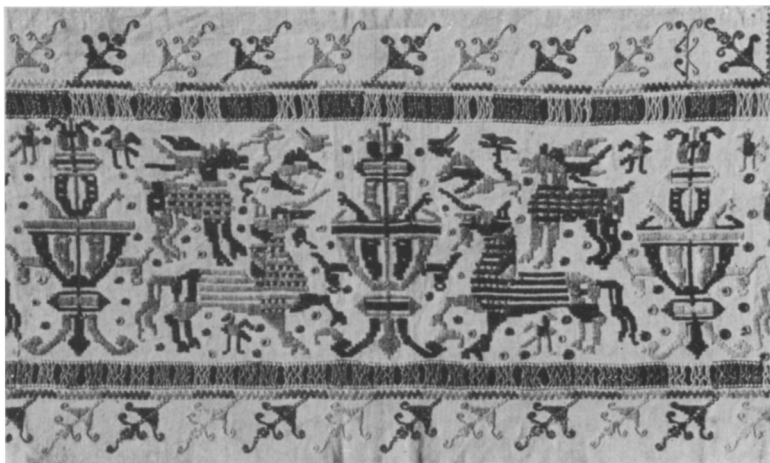
a half later. It shows Sienese art still occupied with calm problems of exquisite decoration and the expression of more than human loveliness, though in this case the loveliness is more of the fairy-story kind than celestial. Francesco di Giorgio is its author. It is curious to note that this painter of winsome affectations won greatest distinction in such a practical profession as military engineering; it is said he was the inventor of the use of the mine as a means of attack. The panel is a

of Beatrice is found in the Purgatory, Cantos XXIX and XXX, and its preciseness and symbolism allow no liberties.

B. B.

LACES FROM THE IDA SCHIFF COLLECTION

THE Schiff Collection of early Italian laces and embroidered altar linens, from which the Museum has recently acquired a series of valuable documents, represents



EMBROIDERED ALTAR CLOTH
ITALIAN, XVI CENTURY

fragment, perhaps of a decoration for a marriage chest, and shows the Triumph of a lady wearing a brocaded gown of the color of tarnished silver. She is seated on a golden chariot drawn by two griffins and followed by two others. A chorus of blonde ladies, clothed in brocades of dull metallic colors, sings beside her car; some wear pearl necklaces and carry gloves. The background is a hilly landscape. The panel is reproduced in Cassoni by Schüring (No. 463), where it is entitled *The Triumph of Beatrice*. It could not represent this subject, however, unless one were to allow its painter a carelessness in regard to accuracy of illustration which is characteristic of artists of our own times but which was non-existent in the fifteenth century. The description of the Triumph

many years of discriminating study on the part of the connoisseur whose name it bears. Madame Schiff's interest in lace dates from the time of her marriage, when, as a young woman, she took up her residence in Florence. She was one of the first to become actively associated with the movement looking toward the revival of the lace industry, and the establishment of her school in Florence proved the inspiration that led her to form her remarkable collection, which includes a most complete group of early bobbin laces and some of the finest embroidered linens ever assembled by a private collector.

This collection in its entirety was exhibited in Rome about 1901 at the Castle of Sant' Angelo, where a special gallery was set aside for its display. At that

time the Italian Government was anxious to acquire it. It has now been divided among three museums—New York, Cleveland, and Minneapolis. The Metropolitan Museum portion of the collection, which numbers three hundred and seventy-seven pieces, will be exhibited in Gallery H 22-A beginning February 13.

To those who know Italy, these fabrics will carry their thoughts back to pleasant hours spent among the fascinating haunts of Florence, that enchanting city where in pre-war times bits of lace and embroidery, lovely brocades and other delightful suggestions of travel were within reach of the modest purse, treasures whose fortunate possessors have a ready medium through which they may once more visualize the picturesque life of bygone days.

There are many beautiful pieces in the collection, but none more appealing than the quaint fascias that the Italian mothers embroider for their bambini, swaddling bands such as are shown in the closely swathed babes in the lovely della Robbia frieze of the Spedale degli Innocenti in Florence. Of these the Museum has three beautiful examples: two are worked in colored silks, one of which has a series of stars and crosses ornamenting its wider part, with a charming border and edge of pictos running along one side; the third is in solid white embroidery of a lovely pattern, dating from the sixteenth century.

In the division of the collection, the Museum was fortunate also in acquiring two beautiful pillows which, in a way, may be associated with the fascias when one remembers the portrait of the infant Leopold de' Medici in the Pitti Gallery, in which the princely head is seen resting on a similar pillow. The case of one of these is of hand-woven linen elaborately embroidered in white with details in cutwork, and of the same general proportions as that shown in the work of Tito. The second has a less elaborate case and is of an entirely different kind of work, being worked in crimson silk in a simple outline stitch and, like the fascia worked in color, is probably of an earlier period than the white.

Another piece that makes the every-day

life of the eighteenth century seem very near to us, the life that has been portrayed so vividly in the works of Alessandro Longhi, is a hair-dresser's pinafore dating from the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. This has a border of reticello and is edged with macramé lace; it is shaped to fit the neck and is fastened in front by a small button and loop—a quaint reminder of old-fashioned ways.

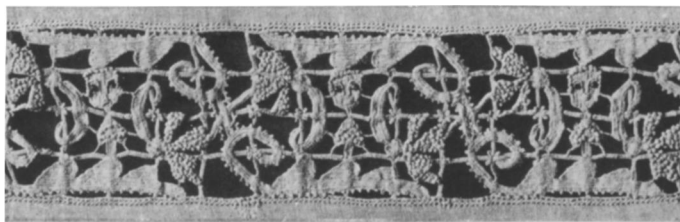
Among the altar cloths and embroidered linens there are two worked in color. One, illustrated herewith, has a striking pattern made up of a central fountain supported by confronted stags forming a broad border worked in blue and bistre thread and an edge finished with pointed bobbin lace in the same colors, an important work of the early sixteenth century. This cloth has been used by Madame Schiff as a model for modern work and has been copied extensively in the Antella school. The other cloth worked in color is a Sicilian piece of a still earlier date. The center has been renewed, but the original border of drawnwork is intact. The design of this is an interesting arrangement of archaic trees and animals such as are found in the early pattern books. The stag which appears in these two pieces is found much more frequently in Sicilian and Spanish works than in those of northern Italy; it is also a recurrent motive in the earliest German pattern books.

One of the most beautiful of the altar cloths has broad end borders of cutwork and embroidery exquisite in quality and design and is edged with delicate pointed bobbin lace of unusual charm. This is also one of the pieces that have served as models for modern work and that ought to prove an inspiration to our own needlewomen.

Another attractive cloth is one of fine hand-woven linen edged with a narrow border of cutwork and finished with pillow lace; this cloth has end borders of punto in aria in which the ambitious worker has apparently chosen her subject from a contemporary pattern book, the masks and curves on either side suggesting the double-tailed mermaid, a favorite device among the ornamentists of the Renaissance

early employed by the designers of lace patterns. It appears in the *Esemplario* of Taglienti, published in Venice in 1531, a model which might easily have been the original from which this piece was worked, as many of the early patterns were copied by later publishers. A more elaborate pattern with this same device was published by Matthio Pagan in 1550. In this cloth the designer has repeated this motive as a unit the entire width of the cloth, with the result that its unvaried repetition reminds one of the fascinating strings of dolls cut from folded paper that always delight the heart of a child. The black bead eyes in this work, however, give to each figure a marked individuality

lacking courage still clings to the supporting threads of the fabric. One of the finest works of this type in American collections, is a splendid border preserved in the Cooper Institute for the Arts of Decoration. Two other examples, less elaborate, form part of the Museum collection; one, a beautiful strip, lent by Mrs. J. S. Spingarn, and a second, a large linen sheet, bordered with a similar band. Another sheet, an exceptionally fine specimen, has been acquired recently by the Cleveland Museum. Patterns for this work are found in Pagan's *L'Honesto Esespio*, published in Venice in 1550, and in the *Vera Perfettione* of Ostaus, published in 1561. One of the very few portraits in which



PUNTO IN ARIA, ABOUT 1600

and make this piece one of the most interesting in the collection. The use of beads is an attractive feature in Venetian lace-work of this period, the accentuation of the eye in the archaic motives giving to the quaint figures an added interest. The almost human expression of these little masks, whose solemn eyes have met the shifting scenes of their environment for three centuries with an enquiring glance of wonderment, has in it an irresistible charm.

The needlepoint in this cloth is an unusually fine example of *punto in aria* of the transition type, that is, where the worker, wearied with the geometric lines of the *reticello*, was beginning to appreciate the value of her perfected technique developed from the linen foundation, and was beginning to reach forward to a less restricted field. In *punto in aria* of this period, the rectangular framework formed by the warp and weft threads of the linen still supports the pattern, which has already passed beyond the geometric type, but the worker

lace of this kind is found is the Venetian *Lady* by Paris Bordone, 1500-1571, preserved in the Musée Douai; in this portrait the sleeves of the bodice are finished with cuffs showing a vine pattern in *punto in aria*, supported by the quadrangular framework of the linen threads, as in this cloth, which likewise has details of the pattern worked in knotted relief.

The most important piece in the group of network is an imposing border or bed valance of *burato*, called a "wedding train," which has for its design an interesting procession of archaic birds and figures combined with a Sicilian coat of arms.

From a collector's point of view, there is nothing more interesting than the wonderful variety of early Italian bobbin laces, a valuable accession to the Museum study collection, offering a rich field to designers in search of inspiration for machine-made fabrics. Many of these laces are worked from designs that originated in the sixteenth-century pattern books—*Le Pompe*

(Venice, 1557); Il Monte (Venice, 1560); Parasole (Venice, 1597); and Mignerac (Paris, 1605)—designs that in simplicity and beauty of line have never been surpassed. Many of these appear in portraiture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when men and women alike availed themselves of the lace-maker's art in embellishing the costumes designed for court and state functions, while the Church used quantities of the exquisite fabric executed in the convents, in enriching its vestments and altar linens. Every household, also had its sacred linen, used only at the time of mourning, a custom that has preserved to us many valuable documents.

There is great charm in the patterns of these early pillow laces that vary from the simplest pointed edgings, such as are found on the ruffs in portraits of the sixteenth century, to the ornate type that figures in the works of Van Dyck and Franz Hals, and is often referred to as "Van Dyck point." Only a fragment remains to us of what must have been a princely collar of some Genoese nobleman or Spanish grandee; a fragment with a crowned eagle as its central motive. The incompleteness of a fragment always gives to it an added interest, for there is about it an enchanting mystery that stimulates the imagination, a mystery just as interesting to the lace collector as that of the Venus of Melos or the Nike of Samothrake to the archaeologist or to the musician the Unfinished Symphony of Schubert.

F. M.

CLASSICAL ACCESSIONS

I. BRONZES

IN trying to form a just appreciation of Greek sculpture it is important to remember that bronze was the favorite material of the Greek sculptor. It is true that as we think of Greek statuary nowadays it is chiefly the marble works that come to mind; for it is these that have been preserved in larger numbers. But literary evidence shows that bronze statues were more numerous in Greek times, especially until the fourth century B.C.; so that the reason for the rarity of full-

size bronze sculptures is due solely to the intrinsic value of the material, which caused them to be melted down in later ages, just as copper church-bells and kettles were melted down in the late war to serve other purposes. Our great lack in bronze statues is partly made up by the smaller bronzes which have survived and which sometimes help us to visualize the larger works which are lost. Small Greek bronzes thereby attain an importance which can hardly be overestimated; for they show us what a beautiful and appropriate material bronze was for Greek sculptural work, bringing out peculiarly well its precision and the subdued light and shade of the restrained modeling. And we must remember that the reflections in the softly undulating surface were originally even more marked, when the bronze was resplendent in its original golden color. For the different colored patinas which now cover the surface of Greek bronzes were not intentional, but have been formed later in the course of time.

The collection of Greek and Roman bronzes in our Museum ranks among the best in the world. Its importance is further increased by the purchases made within recent years (exhibited in the Room of Recent Accessions), which include a number of statuettes of first quality, as well as decorative pieces from vases, couches, chests, etc. They testify both to the popularity of bronze among the ancients and to their desire to have the common objects of daily life as artistic as possible.

Our most important new acquisition is the statuette of an athlete standing in a beautiful rhythmic pose (fig. 1; height, $6\frac{1}{4}$ in. [15.9 cm.]). The right arm is bent sharply at the elbow with the hand brought up to the chest, while the left is extended sidewise and bent at the elbow. The finished execution of the graceful, slim body shows that a great master was here at work. Probably it is a reproduction of a statue; at least it has all the qualities of a full-size work in its large conception and in the fact that it is composed to be seen from all sides. The combination of restraint and natural grace is characteristic of the